

Great Northern Transmission Line Team
c/o HDR Engineering
701 Xenia Ave. South 600
Minneapolis, MN 55416

29 April 2013

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MAIL ROOM

Team Members:

I am an owner of forty acres that lies within the proposed Great Northern Transmission Line corridor. I attended the open house in Big Fork, April 23rd. To my dismay a clear map of existing corridors in northern Minnesota was not displayed as well as a plat map of ownerships in the study area -- I had to show the representative where my property was located as ownership was not evident and expressions on faces of participants seemed surprised to see where small private ownerships existed.

My location is T61N R23W S32 NWSW. This parcel has been in our family since 1933 -- 80 years. It is remote and quite secluded relative to even today's standards. It has always been a focus where our family gets together for reunions as well as skiing and hunting trips. Furthermore, the land provides resource material necessary for my wood carving artistry. Telephone communications are iffy at best in my area and to make any emergency calls I need to walk one half mile to a hilltop to have 90-95% assurance of telephone contact -- transmission corridors will not help and may jeopardize our safety for emergency situations.

Northern Minnesota has a strong history in managing its forest resource base for economic well-being of its people and communities. Its boreal forest zone is a southern limit of the great North American boreal forest. The continuity and health of Minnesota's boreal forest zone and associated wildlife is constantly being threatened by development activities. We are proud to have confirmed sightings of mink, otter, weasel, fisher, martin, wolverine, and other species over the years. The wildlife populations fluctuate with the characteristics of the forest cover which recovers after intermittent harvests.

To reduce the fractionalization of property ownership as well as maintaining continuity of managed forest areas, Minnesota has the *Sustainable Forest Incentive Act* and a strong forest stewardship program to help, in part, small woodland owners. My forty acres are entered into the SFIA program and I am doing my best to pursue the goals of my forest management plan developed by a consultant forester. I value the extent of our boreal forest and appreciate the renewable forest resource. I expect corporate entities to likewise respect and do their best to protect the resource.

Transmission corridors are a blatant insult to our boreal forest zone for perpetuity (by the way, "perpetuity" is a long time). The corridor removes the area from our renewable resource base for our forest-based communities. Future right-of-way management activities require constant intervention by mechanical or chemical actions. The boreal forest does not need more physical and chemical impacts.

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It is imperative that these new transmission corridors follow existing right-of-ways to preserve the continuity of our forest resource base and it is imperative that the project demonstrates that it has done its absolute best to minimize the need for new corridors -- minor cost savings are not an acceptable excuse. One-half to 0.75 miles west of State Highway 65, southward from its junction with State Highway 1, there is an existing transmission corridor that was not presented on the project maps. Why? Why not use this corridor, expand slightly if necessary, and minimize impacts to the boreal forest zone for perpetuity? Likewise, minor adjustments elsewhere could make the project more acceptable. Or, the project may be better off going south of Winnipeg to the Fargo/Detroit Lakes area and then east to Duluth -- corridor construction may be less costly while avoiding the boreal forest zone..

I hope you reconsider the plans for the corridor and do what is best for our forest resource base.

Sincerely,

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